

# 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival Schedule

## Thursday, April 30

**Thursday, April 30, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Birding Hike at Eagle Slough** (7 a.m.) at Eagle Slough Natural Area. Free. Join Steve Heeger for a birding walk through this 127 acre urban wetland area. Eagle Slough is one of the most recent local areas to be returned to conservation. Meet at the entrance to Eagle Slough located on Waterworks Road, just north of Ellis Park. Expect to see warblers and other songbirds. *Steve Heeger is an avid birder and past President of the Evansville Audubon Society.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wessellmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wessellmannaturesociety.org) for more information.



**Thursday, April 30, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Audubon Art - "Birds, Birds, Birds"** (4:00 – 5:15 pm) at the Audubon Museum, Audubon State Park, Henderson, KY. \$5.00 per person. Students ages 8-12 are invited to experience hands-on drawing techniques and a visit from the birds themselves. Pre-registration is required. Presented by Kim McGrew. *Kim has served as an art instructor and festival coordinator for the last 16 years at the Henderson County Elementary schools, Henderson Community College and several tri-state schools. For the past six years, Kim has enjoyed her work as the J. J. Audubon Museum's Arts Administrator.* Contact Kim McGrew at (270) 827-1893 or [kim.mcgrew@ky.gov](mailto:kim.mcgrew@ky.gov) to register.

**Thursday, April 30, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: "The Search for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, by Alan Gehret."** (7:00 – 8:00 pm) at the Audubon Museum, Audubon State Park, Henderson, KY. The Ivory-billed Woodpecker, the largest woodpecker in North America, has been presumed to be extinct since the 1940's. Alleged sightings have sporadically occurred throughout its former range during the past 50 years. In 2005, sightings and new evidence in Arkansas and Florida have given new hope to the birding community of its continuing existence. In January 2009, a research team from Auburn University entered Florida's Choctawhatchee River basin, a hotspot for alleged sightings, for evidence of the reclusive bird. Join us for an overview of this expedition and decide for yourself. *In 1985 Alan Gehret accepted a position at Mill Grove, the first home in America of John James Audubon in Pennsylvania. Over the next 20 years, Alan became an expert on the life, travels, and art of this truly American icon. In 2005 he became Curator of the John James Audubon Museum in Henderson where he is responsible for the Museum collection, acquisitions, park festivals, and museum exhibits.* Contact Julie McDonald at (270) 826-2247 or [juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov](mailto:juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov) for further information.

## Friday, May 1

**Friday, May 1, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Birding Day Trip to Patoka River NWR & Cane Ridge WMA; Duke Energy lake; Saunders Woods** (5:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) Trip departs from Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. \$30 per person. Transportation and box lunch provided. This is a rare opportunity for a full day of quality birding led by experienced area birders. Trip includes visits to the following:

- **Saunders Woods** – Remnant bottomlands hardwood forest. Expect to see warblers and woodpeckers.
- **Duke Energy power plant** – Large cooling lake and ash settlement ponds. Expect to see shorebirds and late migrating waterfowl. Many extraordinarily rare bird species as "first sightings" in Indiana have been here. Last year a piping plover was spotted at this stop!
- **Cane Ridge WMA** – Wetlands restoration using moist soil units and Least Tern nesting area. Although Least Terns are not anticipated, expect to see shorebirds, herons, and other wetland birds.
- **Patoka River NWR** – Bottomland forested wetland, river oxbows, and Snakey Point Marsh. Expect to see wetland birds as well as warblers and other migratory songbirds.

The above trip will be led by the following:

- **Chuck Mills** – *Mr. Mills has been a serious birder for 40 years and has observed 318 species in Gibson County alone. He has also monitored an interior least tern colony for several years for Indiana DNR.*
  - **Richard and Sue Vernier** – *The Verniers are long-time members of the Evansville Audubon Society and avid birders.*
  - **Tim Hayes** – *Mr. Hayes is an environmental manager for Duke Energy and has been instrumental in working with US F&W to create the least tern habitat.*
  - **Bill McCoy** – *Mr. McCoy is the US Fish & Wildlife Refuge Manager of Patoka River NWR & Cane Ridge WMA.*
- Registration is limited and will close on April 28th. Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wessellmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wessellmannaturesociety.org) to register.

**Friday, May 1, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: "The Wonderful World of Wood Warblers".**

(6:30 pm) at the Audubon State Park Museum. Free. Imagine gorgeous, colorful tropical birds right here in the tri-state, singing, feeding, pleasing your eyes. Learn about eye-catching warblers, the tropics they come from, what they look like, and when and where you can see them. Presented by Sharon Sorenson. *Sharon and Charles Sorenson combine their interest in photography with their life-long pursuit of knowledge about birds to provide educational programs for the public. Practicing what they preach, they have transformed their once-agricultural property into a wildlife habitat that has, to date, attracted 147 bird species as well as butterflies, mammals, and reptiles. The Evansville Courier and Press publishes Sharon's bi-weekly "For the Birds" columns.* Contact Julie McDonald at (270) 826-2247 or [juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov](mailto:juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov) for further information.

**Saturday, May 2**

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Birding Hike at Howell Wetlands** (7 a.m.) Meet at the Howell Wetland entrance on Tekoppel Ave. Free. Join Wild Birds Unlimited co-owner Tim Griffith for a birding walk through this 35 acre urban wetland. *Tim Griffith and his wife Margi are co-owners of Evansville's Wild Birds Unlimited, the premier store for everything related to birds.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Birding Hike at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve** (7:00 a.m.) Depart from the Nature Center at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Join Evansville Audubon Society member Evan Speck for a birding hike through this 200 acre old growth lowland forest. *Evan Speck is an anesthesiologist by profession and grew up in a birding family in Wilmington, Delaware. He has birded extensively in Delaware, upper New York State, and of course, here in the Tri-State.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Birding Hike at Angel Mounds Historic Site** (7:00 a.m.) Meet in front of the Interpretive Center. Free. Join local birder Chris Pace for a hike through this historic natural area. *Chris Pace is a Credit underwriter at Integra Bank, birder and backpacker/kayaker with twenty years experience.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Birding Hike at Bluegrass Fish & Wildlife Area** (7:00 am) Meet at main parking area at the west entrance on Boonville-New Harmony Rd, just off I-164. Free. Note: There are no restrooms available during this hike! Join Don Batema for a hike through this reclaimed mine habitat. Bluegrass is an excellent place for observing grassland and water birds. *Dr. Don Batema Teaches chemistry and environmental science at the University of Evansville. Has been doing bird surveys at Bluegrass Fish & Wildlife Area for the past six years.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Audubon's Bird Migration Walks** (7:30 to 9:00 a.m.) Hike departs from Audubon Museum, Audubon State Park, Henderson, KY. Come join us in a celebration of the spring season migration as we hike Audubon State Park! Bring your binoculars, field guide and notebook to identify new birds for your life list. \$2.00 per person. Led by Micah Perkins. *Micah Perkins teaches biology at Owensboro Community and Technical College. He has been studying birds for the past 11 years including research, surveys, and education.* Contact Julie McDonald at (270) 826-2247 or [juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov](mailto:juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Family Birding Hike at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve** (8:00 a.m.) Depart from the Nature Center entrance at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Join Steve Heeger for a hike through this 200 acre old growth lowland forest. This hike is suitable for families with children. *Steve Heeger is an avid birder and past President of the Evansville Audubon Society.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Audubon's Bird Migration Walks** (8:30 to 10:00 a.m.) Hike departs from Audubon Museum, Audubon State Park, Henderson, KY. Come join us in a celebration of the spring season migration as we hike Audubon State Park! Bring your binoculars, field guide and notebook to identify new birds for your life list. \$2.00 per person. Led by Carol Gehret. *Carol Gehret has been an avid birder for much of her life, having discovered the joy of birds while studying in England. She served as education chair person and president of the South Mountain Audubon Society in Gettysburg, PA where she also lead birding trips, coordinated the annual Christmas Bird Count and was regional coordinator for the first state wide Breeding Bird Census. In 2004 she was one of the guest leaders for bird tours at the nationally know Festival of the Cranes at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico.* Contact Julie McDonald at (270) 826-2247 or [juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov](mailto:juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: "Owl Pellets: The Exciting World of Owl Puke!"** (9:00 am) at the Nature Center at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Join Indiana Master Naturalist Gena Garrett for a fascinating look at owl pellets! Participants will learn about native owls, their hunting habits and physiology. Then each participant will dissect a sterilized owl pellet to see what exciting remnants it contains! You won't want to miss this hands-on science discovery workshop! *Gena Garrett is an Indiana Master Naturalist and the Science Educator at the Evansville Museum of Art, History and Science.* Participation is limited, pre-registration is required. Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) to register.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Spring Bird Banding Workshop** (9:00 to 10:30 a.m.) at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Come and help Scott Kramer with an ongoing conservation project as he catches, identifies, bands and releases birds from the Nature Preserve. This is a great opportunity for spotting early spring migratory birds, so bring a camera! *Scott Kramer is an Indiana Master Naturalist, Certified Interpretive Guide and Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve's Master Bird Bander.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Family Day!** (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.) at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Bring the kids out for a full day of family birding fun as participants learn about birds and their habitats! Experience over a dozen stations offering free birding crafts and activities for kids of all ages to enjoy. Presented in cooperation with the Evansville Audubon Society and Southwestern Indiana Master Naturalist Association. Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: "A Walk with Bluebirds"** (10:30 to 11:30 a.m.) at the Sycamore Shelter at Audubon State Park, Henderson, KY. Free. Discover the lives and nesting habits of Eastern Bluebirds and other cavity nesters. Bob and Judy Peak will introduce visitors to their ongoing nesting research conducted at numerous parks including Audubon State Park. Attendees may have an opportunity to see eggs and nestlings inside nesting boxes. This walking tour is moderate in difficulty and mostly on concrete. Wheelchairs can likely be accommodated by use of a vehicle. *Henderson residents Bob and Judy Peak are retired teachers who have monitored and managed bluebird nest boxes in western Kentucky/Tennessee for nearly 20 years. During their tenure, over 18,000 baby bluebirds (and over 1,300 baby birds from six other species) have fledged from their nest boxes.* Contact Julie McDonald at (270) 826-2247 or [juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov](mailto:juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov) for further information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: "Creating a Bird Friendly Backyard"** (11:00 am to Noon) at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Join Kathy Eicher for an informative workshop about how to make your yard (big or small) a bird friendly habitat. This workshop is family friendly – children are welcome. *Kathy Eicher is a Master Naturalist and has completed the Master Gardener course. She is an avid bird and native wildflower enthusiast.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Jeop-Birdy!** (12:00-1:00) at the Nature Center at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Join Evansville Audubon member Carol Pettys and test your Bird IQ! Participants will learn some interesting facts and test their own knowledge of our feathered friends. Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: "Explore Raptors"** (12:30-1:30 p.m.) at the Audubon Museum, Audubon State Park in Henderson, KY. Free. Join Park Naturalist Julie McDonald for this exciting program. Using live birds, participants will learn the characteristics of birds of prey, their role in the ecosystem, and how interactions with humans have impacted these majestic creatures. *Julie McDonald is the Park Naturalist at John James Audubon State Park. She has worked in the environmental education / environmental interpretation field for 10 years. Julie is a Project WILD, Flying WILD, Project WET and Project Learning Tree training facilitator.* Contact Julie McDonald at (270) 826-2247 or [juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov](mailto:juliea.mcdonald@ky.gov) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Live Raptors Program!** (1:00 to 2:00 p.m.) at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Join Wesselman Nature Society's Raptor Docents as they introduce you to Wesselman Nature Society's fascinating resident raptors. Learn what adaptations equip raptors to be some of the most efficient predators on earth and learn why they are dependent upon us for survival. Contact Lauren Preske at 812-479-0771, ext. 102 or [lpreske@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:lpreske@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: "Bird ID Basics"** (2:00 to 3:00 p.m.) at the Nature Center at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Join seasoned birder Tim Griffith for a terrific workshop about simple backyard bird identification for beginning birders. This workshop is family friendly – children are welcome. *Tim Griffith and his wife Margi are co-owners of Evansville's Wild Birds Unlimited, the premier store for everything related to birds.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Bird House Building Workshop with Home Depot** (2:00 to 3:00 p.m.) at the Nature Center at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Free. Join Home Depot employees for a fun workshop where you can build your own bird house. All materials will be supplied, while supplies last. Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for more information.

**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Junior Birder Hike** (4:00 –5:00 p.m.) at Howell Wetlands. For ages 12-17. Meet at the Howell Wetland entrance on Tekoppel Ave. Free. Join other teens interested in birds for a guided birding hike through this 35 acre urban wetlands. Led by Neal Bogan, Tim Griffith and Mel Lodato. *Neal Bogan is a Naturalist with Wesselman Nature Society and avid birder. Tim Griffith and his wife Margi are co-owners of Evansville's Wild Birds Unlimited, the premier store for everything related to birds. Mel Lodato teaches 5th grade at Oakland City Elementary School, is an Indiana Master Naturalist and has been a birder and amateur naturalist for thirty-five years.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for more information.

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**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Reception for Keynote Speaker Alan Gehret** (6:30 p.m.) At the Nature Center at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. For members of Wesselman Nature Society, Evansville Audubon Society, Friends of JJ Audubon State Park. Join us as we welcome Alan Gehret to Evansville. Members only, please register by April 29<sup>th</sup> at [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) or (812)479-0771, x 100.



**Saturday, May 2, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival Keynote Address:**

**"History and Impact of John James Audubon on Ornithology and Bird Conservation in the Ohio Valley"** (7:30 p.m.) Free. Seating is limited. At the Nature Center at Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. John James Audubon is considered by many to be America's first painter of international acclaim. Not only was he an accomplished artist but also a talented writer who faithfully recorded his wildlife observations and studies as well as the changing face of the young nation. Audubon's 435 life-size paintings that compose his *Birds of America* folio not only changed the tradition of natural history illustration, but revolutionized America's and the world's view of birds and subsequently sparked the wildlife conservation movement. Alan Gehret, Curator of the John James Audubon Museum, will look at Audubon's life and work and its impact on birds and birding today. *In 1985 Alan Gehret accepted a position at Mill Grove, the first home in America of John James Audubon in Pennsylvania. Over the next 20 years, Alan became an expert on the life, travels, and art of this truly American icon. In 2005 he became Curator of the John James Audubon Museum in Henderson where he is responsible for the Museum collection, acquisitions, park festivals, and museum exhibits.* Contact Susan Haislip at (812) 479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for additional information.

**Sunday, May 3**

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(7:00 am) Meet at main parking area at the west entrance on Boonville-New Harmony Rd, just off I-164. Free. Note: There are no restrooms available during this hike! Join Evansville Audubon Society Member Evan Speck for a hike through this reclaimed mine habitat. Bluegrass is an excellent place for observing grassland and water birds. *Evan Speck is an anesthesiologist by profession and grew up in a birding family in Wilmington, Delaware, and has birded extensively in Delaware, upper New York State, and of course, here in the Tri-State.* Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) for more information.

**Sunday, May 3, 2009 Ohio Valley Birding Festival: Twin Swamps Nature Preserve.** (7:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.) Trip departs from Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Cost is \$18 per person, transportation provided. Join birder Larry Caldwell for a hike through one of the few existing remnants of cottonwood-bald cypress swamp, which once occurred over large portions of the Ohio and Wabash River Valleys. Twin Swamps is home to many bird species normally associated with this type of habitat, such as the blue-gray gnatcatcher and the brilliantly colored prothonotary warbler. Pre-registration by April 28<sup>th</sup> required. Contact Susan Haislip at 812-479-0771, ext. 100 or [info@wesselmannaturesociety.org](mailto:info@wesselmannaturesociety.org) to register.

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